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and Statistics.

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CONTAINS THE OFFICIAL REPORTS OF BOTH.

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THE TAX ON FERTILIZERS.

After several years of fruitless efforts on the part of the agricultural interest to secure protection against acknowledged and patent impositions in artificial fertilizers which the changed condition of labor made indispensable to the farmer, at the session of the Legislature of North Carolina, 1876-'7, an enactment was procured compelling an analysis of all fertilizers offered for sale in the State, and imposing a license tax of \$500 upon each manufacturer, and upon each specialty he offered for sale, the object of a tax so large being in connection with compulsory analysis, to exclude the fraudulent dealer, and also to sustain a permanent agency for scientific scrutiny. The law went into operation with the hearty approbation of the farmer, and, until within a few weeks past, we have never heard a breath of discontent. Now, as the session of the Legislature approaches, the papers of Raleigh are filled with demands from correspondents for the repeal of the law.

Now, we would like to know at whose instigation the demand is made? Does the suggestion really come from the farmer? Why so? According to our understanding, not a cent of the tax falls upon him, and the manufacturer is made to bear the whole burden. If there is any complaint, the latter should be the first to lift up his voice, because he cannot move an inch in the disposal of his products until he has paid his tax of five hundred dollars. But has he any reason to complain? If he is a faithful manufacturer, he is a wise man to invite the closest scrutiny into the fidelity of his operations. If he passes the ordeal, he emerges endorsed by high scientific authority, and only encounters the rivalry of those who submitted to like conditions. Empires and Swindlers have been driven from the field, and it remains in possession of those proved worthy of trust. Now the demand for fertilizers being of that imperative kind that compels a large and constant supply, these fortunate individuals acquire a sort of monopoly of sale which brings to them such a revenue as to make the charge of tax on them too insignificant to be regarded. The manufacturer cannot then be the suggester of the complaint.

Why should the farmer be such? Compelled to have an abundant and constant supply of fertilizers, he is secure, under the law, of getting value for his

money. He knows what he is purchasing, and he puts it on his lands with the assurance of commensurate returns. He is the very last man to utter the voice of complaint. But, say his pretended friends, the consumer is made to bear all the burdens of a tax imposed upon any subject of taxation. This is not clear, as a question of political economy. It has been thought by Adam Smith and by Edmund Burke, recognized authorities in such matters, that the producer bore his share of the burden; and any observation will demonstrate that any tax which tends to limit the amount of consumption will recoil back upon the producer. No article can be thrown upon the market, starting from the producer's hands at a high valuation, when, before it has reached its ultimate destination of consumption, it has to bear the load of intermediate high taxation. If an original high price is paid, and high taxes are superadded, it necessarily comes to the consumer so heavily freighted with charges as to take its rank among costly luxuries, and fixes its limits within very narrow bounds of consumption. This finds its illustration in the present history of the tobacco market, when except for fancy qualities, producers are rarely compensated for their labor and expenses.

If therefore any one has the right of complaint in this matter, it is the producer of fertilizers. We have shown that he has no real ground of dissatisfaction, because his tax secures him privileges, and gives him character that far outweigh the trivial exaction of the tax. The farmer pays no tax, and he has no right of complaint except,—and the whole question may begin on this—that the manufacturer essays to reimburse himself by adding to the price of his products. If, to avoid the insignificant amount of the tax, he does add to his charges, instead of being relieved from the tax, he ought to be subjected to three times the amount. For, in the large aggregate of sales made by any one, of all those who have secured the privilege of the North Carolina market, the smallest appreciable difference to the selling price would reimburse them the tax ten times over, and such attempt ought to be met by more stringent legislation instead of by concessions.

We do not wish to see North Carolina take any steps backward in this matter. For the first time in its history, the legislation of the State at the session of 1876-'7 was bold and progressive in favor of its chiefest interest. That had been neglected to the very last, as if agriculture were not a subject of progress and of protection. By that action, enlightened recognition was made of the true policy which should govern the State in the future, however much it had been lost sight of in the past. Agriculture was put at last upon its proper footing, associated with education, with science, with the thought of the statesman and with the care of the legislator.

If this backward step should be taken it will be at the demand of the demagogues who work for cheap popularity by low appeals to popular prejudice. It will be by the pretended friend, but real enemy of the farmer, who assigns to him the destiny of the drudge, the hewer of wood and the drawer of water, the

creature who is to plod along forever in mental darkness and forever be content to toil for his taskmaster, because forever to be kept in ignorance of his powers and the value of his services. The Agricultural Department, yet in its infancy, is designed to be the disseminator of practical information, of scientific truth clothed in intelligent garb, the gatherer of facts, the investigator of truth, the scrutinizer of errors, the shield against imposition.

Intelligent farmers recognize all this, and the spirit of enlightenment is possessing all classes of their vocation. But in the infancy of the Department, and before it has taken such hold of the popular mind as to make its existence imperative even at the cost of annual legislative appropriations, it is made to a great degree dependent upon the revenue derived from the tax on fertilizers. To abolish that tax now, would be to abolish the Department.

Are the people prepared for that contingency at the bare suggestion, that the tax on fertilizers is oppressive to the farmer? We think not; and certainly not before facts had been presented to demonstrate such oppression.

J. D. C.

AGRICULTURAL PAPERS.

Hon. Conrad Wilson lately delivered an address before the New York Farmer's Club, on the subject of agricultural literature. In the course of his remarks he stated that agricultural papers, or papers publishing correct agricultural matter, had worked more of good to the farming interest than all other means put together. They had entirely revolutionized the methods employed, much as might be said to the contrary, for the very worst old foggy to be met with to-day was far ahead of the best old foggy of fifty years back. Farmers of this class might endeavor not to progress, but nevertheless they could not help being carried along the current, to some extent, at least.

But, continued he, the men who take the papers are the men who are leading the day. It is usually possible in passing through a rural district to point out each farm at which a journal of the class named is taken and read. It shows in every department. Manures are more abundant than on the farm where no papers are taken, and the latest and best methods of every kind are more or less in vogue. Vegetation seems to have a new impulse—the very roots of the crops seem to strike deeper and spread wider than where the paper is unknown, and the green leaves assume a brighter shade of green and the cereal grains a deeper tinge of gold. And finally, as a crowning evidence of what is here claimed for the influence of the press, along with this new vigor of vegetation and more abundant yield, we find also a reduction of cost that is even more important than all the rest.

It would be easy, he says, to refer by name, if it were not invidious to papers in which a single number, could be pointed out which for intrinsic value is worth to a shrewd farmer the subscription of a lifetime. Even single passages could be referred to in which the facts comprised in a few lines are worth more to an intelligent, practical man than a ton of guano or an acre of land, for the acre of land is confined

to one unchanging spot and the ton of guano admits of only one application. But the great facts of experience in farming are not bounded by an acre and do not expire in one application. On the contrary, they are developed by use and grow by repetition. They spread and multiply from farm to farm and from year to year, until a continent is made richer by them and posterity hails them as a treasure.

The timidity shown by many in applying a sum so ridiculous as, say, \$2 to obtain the priceless knowledge on which depend the whole value and final profit of their business is more than surprising, he thinks. The trifling sums often lavished without a thought on objects of comparatively no value, if applied to such a purpose as this, would be sufficient to supply a journal that would at once create a new atmosphere of thought in the house, and while thus rounding out the education of the family, would also enlarge the yield and the profit of harvests to come.

This is exactly the right kind of talk to work wonders in favor of true agricultural progress. The man who has never taken a paper knows but little of the value of one, and unless some more fortunate neighbor tells him about it he may be a long time in finding out its value.

The State Fair.

If flattering indications alone are necessary upon which to base a prophecy of gratifying success, then nothing is risked in the assertion that the approaching Exhibition of the North Carolina Agricultural Society will fully come up to all that has been claimed for it. The Fair and its varied connections is a most fruitful subject, and the difficulty in writing upon it is to prevent the pen from gliding into the details of a host of interesting themes, each of which are of sufficient importance to be treated under different heads. But this cannot now be done, and therefore the mention of many things and matters in connection with the Fair are omitted. The present state of efficiency of the State Agricultural Society is the result of no sudden outburst of enthusiasm, but of patient labor, and no man has contributed so much to bring about this desired end as Colonel Thomas M. Holt, the President of the Society. Energetic, liberal and enterprising in his individual affairs, he has enthused the body over which he presides with such success, with that spirit of zeal and industry which rarely fails to encompass success when properly applied. Well and faithfully have the efforts of Colonel Holt been seconded by the Executive Committee, and the efficient Secretary, Capt. C. B. Denson. These gentlemen have labored diligently in their sphere to accomplish all that could be expected of them by the most exacting. That their work has been properly directed and intelligently executed will, we have no doubt, be evidenced by the success of the Fair which opens on Monday next.

Among the attractions of this exhibition will be the encampment of the State Guard, and grand review of the troops by His excellency Gov. Vance. The Hon. Allen G. Thurman of Ohio is expected to deliver the annual address.

OF INTEREST TO ALL

With the present issue closes the second volume of the FARMER AND MECHANIC. When we say that the FARMER AND MECHANIC has attained that success never before known in the history of agricultural journalism, we state what is now an established fact. The FARMER AND MECHANIC is the only weekly paper published in North Carolina devoted exclusively to the farming and mechanical classes, and during the brief period of its existence has secured a circulation far beyond the expectation of the proprietors.

The autumn is the season when our rural people begin to consider what agricultural paper they will take. Those who already take the FARMER AND MECHANIC will not seek to change since the live practical matter it contains both editorial and contributed, speak for itself. The increasing popularity of the FARMER AND MECHANIC is evidenced by its rapidly increasing circulation.

Now is the time to subscribe for the best agricultural and family paper ever published in North Carolina. We intend to make it a welcome visitor to many thousand families, and the exponent of agriculture and the Southern mechanic.

The FARMER AND MECHANIC is the official Organ of the Department of Agriculture and State Grange, and the North Carolina Agricultural Society.

HAVE NO SACKS IN PICKING COTTON.

There is more dirt and trash gathered by the use of sacks and bags than most planters suppose. No person, however careful, can use a sack and have his cotton as clean as if none was used. In picking cotton the picker will have to bend, and consequently the mouth of the sack will receive a large portion of the leaf without his knowledge. When he empties the sack it will be impossible for him to take the leaf out, as it will be crumbled up. Besides this, it is common for those sacks to become ragged, and in dragging will receive dirt. The proper way to pick the cotton is to use two baskets, one smaller than the other; the former may be used of a lighter. The hand should carry four rows across the field at the same time. For instance, put the basket between four rows, then pick two rows by the basket as far as you can throw the cotton in the basket. Then cross over to the next two rows and pick these back; then the four rows are picked beyond the basket, and you are ready to move it, which is easily done and no time lost; thus pick by and back, and thus continue to the end. All the leaf and dirt will be seen, and therefore no excuse for dirty cotton.

MORE CORN AND LESS COTTON.

We cannot too urgently impress upon the farmers of the State the great and urgent importance to them of adopting this change of base. Corn and root crops in plenty, and consequent abundant flocks and herds,—home comforts—advance progress—less labor,—and as much money for the little cotton produced, on account of enhanced value, as for the much hitherto

made to glut the market, impoverish our people. This matter is really worthy of our consideration.

EDITORIAL NOTES

One of the most interesting announcements has been made in relation to approaching State Fair, a fact that the premiums delivered on Saturday of last week.

In Indiana they recently give the old men a chance to tend the State fair, and money and without price persons over seventy years who have resided in the State for forty years are carried on the railroads free and have a "head" tickets to the show.

As an illustration of the rapidity with which sheep-drying is advancing in Texas, it is stated that in 1866 San Antonio received but 60,000 pounds of wool, which were sent to Galveston. In 1877 she received 2,000,000 pounds. The wool of the counties is shipped from Galveston. In 1866 there were shipped only 600,000 pounds. This year there will be shipped 6,500,000 pounds. But in all our leading products, probably by the census, as we stated last week, the utterance of the great statesman, Gladstone, will be shown by the census of the United States is the nation in the world.

Many physicians have said that whiskey is a specific for the poison of snakes, particularly rattlesnakes, and a recent experiment has proved the statement correct. It is eminently true it should be so. Whiskey is continuously in large quantities generates snakes in the field, consequently, the bite of snakes ought to be remedied by the agent that creates them, the imagination. This is a species of involved cause and effect in which the effect in turn comes the cause. A man who drinks whiskey in excess and sees snakes bite him, as he does, and he literally has the bite by taking more whiskey. The imagination, in other words, answers to the reality. The mind disordered by whiskey produces snakes, and whiskey moves the disorder of the field produced by snakes. A medical theory might be evolved—that the danger to a patient sees, or hears, in an abnormal state, be removed or relieved by application of the cause of the state. This is something like the homeopathic principle, though more complicated and subtle. It explains a host of the phenomena of delirium. Men who take a deal of whiskey are apt to see snakes, and to believe they have been bitten by them, and continue to take it to cure the supposed poison of their wounds. What a vast number of men must have been bitten in this manner! How hard they would be to effect a remedy! From drunkenness may, after all, proceed from mere hallucinations.

Attention! Subscribers!

Gentlemen, we do hope you will remember us when reaping what we have sown. A beautiful harvest for each one in this year of plenty. As the country the laborers of the husbandman has been blessed with a noble reward, and trust that as co-laborers we will not be left unpaid.